

## Pneumococcal Infections

Pneumococcal infections are the leading cause of serious illness among young children and are the most frequent cause of pneumonia, bacteremia, sinusitis, and acute ear infections. Pneumococcus is also the most common cause of bacterial meningitis in infants and young children. Infected children can pass the illness on to other children and adults that live with them. Pneumococcus is commonly found in the upper respiratory tract of healthy people.

**CAUSE:** *Streptococcus pneumonia*, a bacterium

**SYMPTOMS:** Sudden onset of shaking, chills, fever, chest pain, difficulty breathing, and cough with rusty colored sputum. In infants and children, fever, vomiting, and convulsions may be the first symptoms.

**TRANSMISSION:** Person-to-person by droplets expelled during sneezing and coughing as well as direct contact with secretions from the nose and mouth. Spread also occurs from hands, tissues, or other items soiled with nose and mouth secretions from an infected person.

**INCUBATION:** Unknown, probably 1 to 4 days.

**CONTAGIOUS PERIOD:** Until 24 to 48 hours after effective treatment begins.



**EXCLUSION**

Until the child has been treated, fever is gone, and the child is well enough to participate in normal activities.

## Prevention & Control

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend children receive the pneumococcal vaccine to prevent invasive pneumococcal disease and pneumonia.
2. Cover mouth when coughing and sneezing with sleeve or tissue.

3. Clean and sanitize mouthed toys at least daily and when soiled.



**1. Bleach Sanitizer (Use non-scented)**

- 1 teaspoon bleach in 1 gallon water
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon bleach in 1 quart water

*USE TEST STRIP TO CHECK CONCENTRATION.*

*DO NOT RINSE, LET AIR DRY.*

*PREPARE FRESH SOLUTION DAILY.*

OR

**2. Commercial or food grade sanitizer that is EPA approved**

*FOLLOW MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS.*

4. Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds. If hand sanitizers are used, they may be used on after thorough hand washing.
5. Diagnosis/Treatment: Laboratory tests are used for diagnosis. Treatment is available.

For more information, you or your physician may call the Central District Health Department at 385-5175, or your local health department.